

**Spartan history:**

The present day 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team was constituted on 12 November 1917 at Camp Green, North Carolina. It was originally designated as Headquarters Detachment, 5th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Division.

In 1918 the Brigade deployed to France to come to the aid of the French on the Western Front during World War I. The Brigade tasted its first combat when they successfully defended a portion of the Allied Expeditionary Forces' frontline during the Third Battle of Aisne.

Next, they proved their courage by launching a surprise attack on the German lines without artillery cover during the Battle of Chateau-Thierry. The Brigade then participated in the Battle of the Marne, from which the 3rd Division derives its motto "Rock of the Marne." Afterwards, the Brigade helped break through the German front and capture the fortified city of Metz during the Battle of Saint-Mihiel. Finally, the Spartans participated in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, which ultimately brought an end to the war. The Brigade's own PFC John L. Barkley received the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions near Cunel, France on 7 October 1918.

In March 1921, the Spartan Brigade was reorganized and reflagged as the 5th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Division. During this period, the unit was privileged to have Brigadier General George C. Marshall (Later 5 Star General, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Nobel Prize Winner) as its distinguished commander. On 16 October 1939, just prior to World War II, the Spartan Brigade was disbanded at Vancouver Barracks, Washington, due to the reorganization of the Army division structure from the "Square" to the "Triangular" concept.

Although the Spartan Brigade headquarters was inactive, the units that comprise the modern brigade were heavily involved in World War II. With the onset of World War II, several units from the Spartan Brigade deployed and participated in four of the five major amphibious landings in the European Theater. They started by successfully driving the Nazi forces from North Africa during Operation Torch and the Tunisia Campaign. The future Spartans turned to Italy in 1943 and first landed in Sicily as part of the Italian Campaign.

These units fought with distinction everywhere from Naples to Rome including the Battle of Anzio, where 22 Americans were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Following the invasion of Normandy, units from the Spartan Brigade began the Liberation of France. They fought their way across Southern France and into the Ardennes, where they participated in the Battle of the Bulge. During the final days of combat, elements of the Spartan Brigade crossed into the Rhineland and surrounded Adolf Hitler's stronghold in Berchtesgaden days before Germany surrendered. Following the defeat of Germany, Spartan Brigade's combat forces redeployed back to the U.S. However, the support forces were shipped to the Pacific where they actively supported the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign until the end of the War.

The Spartan Brigade was called into action once again during the Korean War. They participated in a total of eight separate campaigns and fought from the intervention of the Chinese Communist Forces in November 1950 until the Cease-Fire in 1953.

The Spartan Brigade was reconstituted on 18 April 1963 in the Regular Army, and was redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division as the Reorganization Objective Army Division "ROAD" concept was adopted. Under this concept, the Army became Division centered around its combat and maneuver units. It replaced the old Infantry regiments and Armor combat commands with three combat Brigades.

On 17 June 1963, the 2nd Brigade was activated in Kitzingen, Germany, as a senior headquarters to one armor battalion and two mechanized infantry battalions. Stationed near the Fulda Gap, the main approach route from the east into Western Germany, the Brigade served as a major force of the striking power of the 3rd Infantry Division, dedicated to the defense of the United States and the free world during the height of the Cold War. It is here that the Brigade was given the nickname "Spartans." On 15 January 1994, the 2nd Brigade was deactivated.

This proud unit was reflagged from the 2nd Brigade 24th Infantry Division on 16 February 1996, at Fort Stewart, Georgia as part of the XVIII Airborne Corps Rapid Deployment Force. The 2nd Brigade became the armor heavy brigade in the 3rd Infantry Division. The Brigade conducted numerous deployments to the National Training Center (NTC) and Kuwait for the next 6 years. It was repeatedly designated as the Division Ready Brigade (DRB) and stood ready to deploy in support of Operations Desert Thunder and Desert Fox in defense of Kuwait against Iraqi aggression.

In 2002, the Brigade was positioned in Kuwait to offset potential Iraqi aggression. In March 2003, the Brigade attacked into Iraq to liberate the people of Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein from power. The Brigade seized Baghdad in a lightning quick "Thunder Run." Upon redeployment, the Brigade became the first Brigade in the Army to test a new modular design in personnel manning and allocation of equipment.

In January 2005, and again in May 2007, the Brigade redeployed to combat in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Brigade performed various missions, which included direct action operations against terrorist forces, humanitarian missions, and reconstruction efforts to restore normalcy.

In September 2009, the Brigade redeployed to Iraq, this time to the turbulent northern provinces. Known as the "last hard place in Iraq," the 2nd Brigade became the only Brigade in the 3rd Infantry to serve in all of the major areas of Iraq, south, central and north. Their territory was the largest area in Iraq land wise, spanning the area north of Baghdad running from the Turkish border in the north to the Syrian border in the west to the Iranian border in the east. The mission included combat operations against the enemy, advising and assisting of Iraqi forces, and humanitarian assistance efforts.

On March 7, 2010, the Spartan Soldiers deployed to northern Iraq. "The Spartans helped establish the first free democratic elections ever held in the Middle East and only the second in the modern history of Iraq." After months of training the Iraqi Security Forces, teaming up with the ISF to ensure the Iraqi's people safety and sparking of Iraq's economic growth, Spartans were able to see the fruits of their labor after 70-percent of Iraq's eligible voters turned out to the

elections, March 7, 2010, and elected Iraq's first stable government in years. The Spartans redeployed early November 2010.

In 2012, the brigade deployed to Afghanistan's Logar and Wardak Provinces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2015 the Spartans activated as a Light Infantry Brigade Combat team and in the 2016 deployed throughout the continent of Africa in support of the US AFRICOM's regionally aligned forces mission. The regionally aligned force mission sought to build capacity among many militaries throughout Africa. In December of 2016 the Army chose the Spartan Brigade to convert back into an armored brigade combat team. To gain a competitive advantage over near peer threats, the Army designated the Spartans to become the 15<sup>th</sup> armored brigade combat team. As the Army's most lethal and fit ABCT we will fight and destroy the nation's adversaries with overwhelming combat power. Whenever they are needed, the Soldiers of the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, America's Spartans, will always be the first to answer the call by volunteering to go in harms way for our Nation, living up to the motto "SEND ME!"